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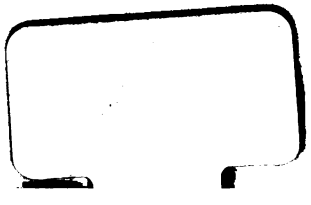

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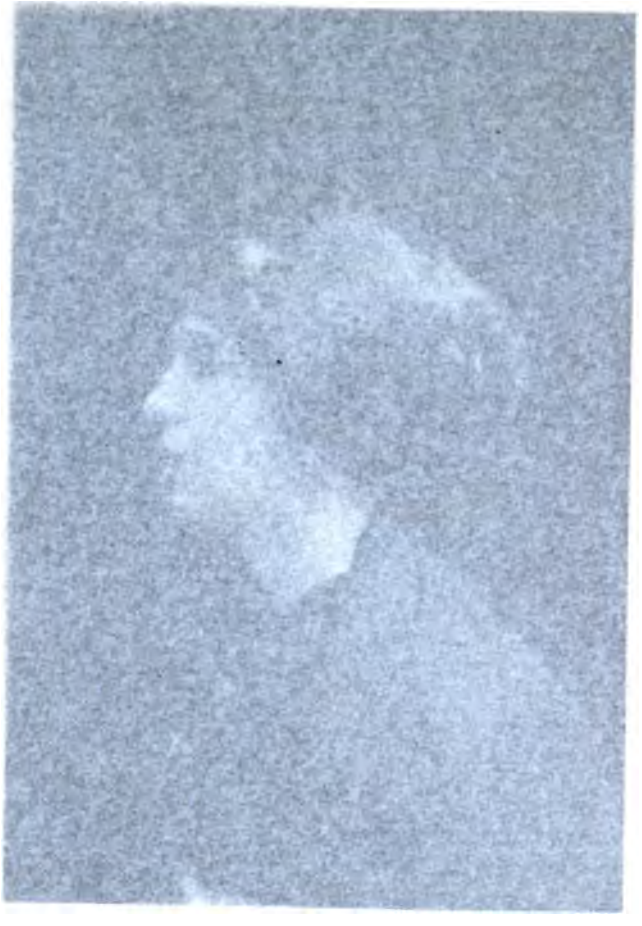

Frances Rodman

The Coming of the Chrysanthemum

And Other Poems

By

Bernece Rodman

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The Knickerbocker Press
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Dedicated

TO MY FRIENDS

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The Coming of the Chrysanthemum

And Other Poems

The Coming of the Chrysanthemum

UMMER is gone, and chill winds are blown;
And late singing birds, all southward have flown;
Through the forest dim now alight with russet hue—
Is a leaf-strewn path where Autumn's Queen will come through.

Amid roadside thickets, where the late birds sang,
Now scented cymes of nightshade berries in graceful clusters hang:
Where fall dandelions have bloomed at will,
Now even fringed gentian flowers with closed eyes are still.

And here as all nature sounds fall's doom,
Cometh forth our flower of hope in bloom.
As of departed flowery days all sadly sing,
She comes to comfort us on golden wing.

The goldenrod died whispering her name,
As forth from October's shade she silently came,
Opening all her glowing golden rays,
To brighten and hallow the late autumnal days.

Twilight

PURPLE twilight gleamed before my sight:
I saw it bend low in the far off west,
To hear the adieu of to-day seeking rest
In its vanishing robe of crimsoning light.
The low-bended bow of twilight is night-day
When its hopes are at rest.

The transient twilight has whispered,
"To-morrow will come,"
To the vanishing, dying hopes of to-day;
And one little hope it holds in a fitful embrace,
And bids it always to stay;
Then turns to greet Night, and hear,
"Thy hope is in vain,
To-morrow you die, for to-morrow is but to-day."

And I, in the cool mossy grass did lie,
My feet on the earth, my face to the sky,
The trees low to the grass at my feet did bend,
While into my Soul this assurance came
That life's fitful twilight is only a test,
Of day reaching out for the end, at its best.

A Floral Offering

N armful of flowers held up for a
screen,
And behind it the sweet laughing
face of Irene;
"This is to wear on your waist,"
she said,
As she handed me one beautiful rose of red.

There were roses of pink and lilies of tiger hue;
Dahlias of deep dark red and cornflowers blue;
They adorn my table but with them all I would
part,
All but the one beautiful red rose she brought
to wear near my heart.

A May Ramble

OME, wander with me, my love, away
To where the birds are singing to-day,
Of May, blithe May, sweet May.
On the edge of a forest with its trees so tall,
Where sunlight and shadow do blend,
Are sweetest violets that seem never to bend
Their gentle eyes earthward, at all.

Beside a gray lichened rock, in its favorite haunt,
Grows graceful columbine, scarlet and yellow,
Nor time nor change from this spot ne'er daunts,
Awaiting the June sun warm and mellow;
And here in Nature's fairest bowers,
I 'll gather the daintiest of wild flowers;
While among thy dark braids, I tenderly entwine
Moss pinks and columbine, in so fitting a shrine.

When twilight reaches out her purple drapery
o'er all,
And forth from the forest dense sounds the
nightingale's call,
Then, love, back to the city together we will bear
Our blithe singing hearts, all free from care,
While everywhere—above and below,—
Is singing the one grand theme I know,
Of love, love, love, sweet love.

Afterthought

SEARCH among the flowers to see
If there blooms one as fair as thee.
Thou art like unto the violet
When in tender sympathy thy eyes are wet,
But then thou hast the lily's purity serene.
Thou art a flow'r more fair—
To me a queen.

When to speak of thee I try,
The muse on airy wings doth fly.
Thy voice is like the music of the pines,
Or a melodious lute of olden times;
Then like the inner voice of a brook
That sings in hidden ecstasy—
But thy voice speaks
More complete, in mystic subtlety.

And up through the mists with suddenly unclosed eyes,
I saw a rainbow had trembled in dull threatening skies.

Bring Me the Lyre

RING me the lyre again,
That from the silence long unbroken
I may touch the chord
Of a song yet unspoken.
There may remain a word unsaid,
To reach a heart that listens,
And longs in darkness all afraid
For the note my lyre 's not spoken.
I would not sing the same old songs;
They speak of griefs, unrighted wrongs,
And though their echo lives not in vain,
My lyre must not sound again
The note to echo in a heart
That may not understand.

To a Mountain

H speak! most mighty Mountain and reveal
But half of all this vast mystery I feel,
As on thy mightiness I gaze,
And speechless stand in awe and wonderingly dazed,

That thou so powerful so all powerless hast stood throughout the ages,
Undaunted, unmoved, while we turn fear's pages.
Speak, speak, O Mountain! and reveal
What mystery 's hidden in thy breast of rock and steel.

The Nightingale

HEARKEN to thee,
Thou light-winged dryad of woodland trees,
Above the monotonous drone of toiling bees,
That labor and toil that they may live,
While thy eager throat such rapture can give.
And to-day I would forget stern necessity and roam,
In the thrall of thy song, though it leads far from home.
To-morrow is time enough to let grim endeavor in:—
To-day I would be free of its noisome din,—
A dreamer in thy wooded heath in harmony with thee.

Here with the trees, I 'll murmur approval of thy
care-free song:
I 'll lie unsought by care, and for thy last call I shall
not long.
Then lingeringly press the feathery grass,
As back to the city reluctantly I pass,
Leaving thee amid the moist scent of perfumed
flowers,
Singing on in full-throated ease of numberless
happy hours.
Across thy melody does there sometimes surge
A note tinged with aught of sorrow's sad dirge?

But I will only hear joy in thy song,
Nor less that speaks to-day of radiant happiness,
Nor envying thee thy care-free lot,
Nor tarry long, lest sorrow invade the spot.
To-morrow may come, it could not be always
to-day,
And in an idle moment, I may then say,
"Did I dream I heard thy song of yesterday?"

To a Skylark

HAT mystic hath thou charmed?
Oh, Lark!
My very soul soars to thy dizzy flight,
And fain would only list and hark,
While sailing on and on. Would I might
But know one-half the charming subtlety
Thou used to cage such enthralling ecstasy—
For thou seemest to have left the earth
And carried off its joy and mirth.

Perhaps, thou soarest e'en to heavens above
To sing in all completeness thy song of love;
Or did'st thou find in thy earthly home unrest,
That caused thy wings to aspire so high? Oh, Lark!

Dost thou e'er lose that mystic, and sink into thy nest,
With strength undone and fainting heart
That thou hast missed thy mark?
Hast thou e'er known a hidden sorrow,
That thou must soar to reach and borrow
From Heaven's own, such radiance at thy will
That can both joy and peace instill?

Oft, charmed and listening have I stood
Within the shelter of some shady wood,
And heard the nightingale's song of rapturous unrest
Because a false and fickle mate had left the nest:
And in her song, I heard a longing that seemed all mine,

But thou hast stilled thy longing,—thy song is
strangely thine.
Did'st thou e'er sink defeated with bruisèd wings,
Then forgotten earth and soared to sing of heavenly
things?
Oh, heavenly minstrel of song, I soar, grow dizzy,
then sink, expire,
Through vain longing to reach heights that know
a heart's desire.

Violets

N unexpected breath of violets to-day
Brought a fragrant memory to me
As alone I wandered,—thoughts idly at play—
Where thou wert wont to stray with me.
A little bunch I found all dewy and wet,
They grew so modest, so far from life's care and fret,
Close to a gray wall so chill and bare—
And I was glad that I had wandered there.

Then as I held them in my hand,
The ghosts of the past about me seemed to stand.
—Ah, modest violet, I cherish thee!—

When adverse fate drew one dear from my side,
In time I watched the years in resignation past
me glide,
When oft I was wont to stray away,
An unexpected breath of violets always brought
sweet memories to me.

No early violets could ever bloom for me
Since our ways diverged by some decree of fate—
And ere the flowers bloom the leaves are dead
upon the tree
Of life and I can cherish only its decay.
Ah! why within the wooded dell did I stray
To waken a memory, a hope that lingereth alway.

Now red tulips are aflame,
Swaying daffodils give Spring a name,
Purple anemones that April brings
Shall, when sounds May's exultant call,
Hedge the garden walks and wall.
But thou comest not through the closed door.
Amber roses wet with rain
Shall tapestry the old gray walls again:
All shall then answer my time-worn song,
"Does unerring nature ever seem wrong?"

I watch the disks of light through the leaves play,
As roving breezes kiss the grass in feathery green
array,
Far from the city's toil and heat,
Far from its erotic, uneven beat.
The bees in brown and gold—
For them the flowers their sweets unfold
Through eternal mists which veil the forests old.
I called and only sobbing winds did wail,
While the noon-day sun seemed shrunken and
pale,
As were the stars the night there sailed
Out on the vast sea of mystery—
One frail bark I watched
As away it sped from me—and sailed and sailed.

Let—To Mrs. H. Pratt Lawrence

NVISIBLE are the ways of grace,
but not unfelt,
Through suffering and heart-
aches unto the soul it is
dealt—
A vision of the one perfect end,
And peace to the troubled heart and fearful soul
It then doth send.

For what are we to plan our ways of grace?
We look with vision blurred into His vast and
glorious face:
Our struggles in selfish aims are naught—so use-
less and vain,
And after all His will is done, when He our full
allegiance gains.
So though His way and time be not mine,—
I do not despair,
For inevitably and surely it will come all unaware,
With battle-worn spirit, soul with hope and fear
beset,
I 'll patiently wait, have faith, and just *Let*

To Irene

LONG for summer with its days of golden sheen,
To put aside all care and wander away with sweet Irene:
I long for summer with its song of the flowers
A lesson to learn in memory of happy hours.

Oh sweet are the days when the air
Is redolent with the perfume of spring,
When Nature puts forth her buds of promise and birds are on wing!

But give me the golden summer with the fulfilment it brings,
When in sweet anticipation my heart longs for its queen,
And the still peaceful days in the mountains with sweet Irene.

To Bessie

IKE a little beam from heaven lent,
To brighten for a time our earthly way,
Our Bessie came—then silently she went,—
Now grief and sorrow in our hearts hold sway.
For scarce had we claimed her for our own,
When God looked down and called her home.

She was too ethereal for earthly days,
And barely touched this earth when its ways
Were deemed too rough for her tender little feet,
And though we grieve we have assurance sweet,
That somehow, sometime, in some place,
We will see again that little face.

Dear little angel, thy wings to thee were given,
To bear thee to us for a while
And safely back to heaven;
And I seem to hear this message to-day,
The Lord giveth and He taketh away!

To a Canary

HOU art a captive, little bird,
And I can set you free:
I thought a lamenting note I heard,
That thou, a captive had to be.

Come forth, unbarred is your prison door,
Freedom is thine as ne'er before.
Art thou afraid thy wings to try,
As wondering you see the lark dart by?

Poor little frightened, fluttering heart,
Would'st thou not from thy prison part?
Why falter now, when thou canst be free,
Before the door to liberty?

Ah! thou hast been caged too long, too long,
And hast only learned the captive's song.
Thy little cage, thou hast grown to love,
And dost not long to soar and sing above.

I too was once a captive and longed to be free;
And prayed for light to find the gate of liberty—
One flash from out the darkness—I saw the open door—
But some echo of my caged heart
Drew me back once more.

The Song of Life

T morn gay snatches of song she 'd sing,—
By noon the music a deeper note had gained,
In twilight the vagueness of the hour seemed to bring
Into the song wild unrest—life's morning was in vain.

At night—a tragedy it was that was sung,
When away from the twilight's fitful gleam,
And dazed not by the dazzling light's bright stream:
That song was ended in despair,—so deep, so vast,—
Till I could hear but a dying sobbing note at last.

When troubled hearts on morning's joyous song
are bent,
If the mournful broken chords of suffering are
spent
In useless struggle, the soul's triumph will not
be won.
O that joy can be so full, and yet so incomplete!
That a life's cherished hopes can but be begun,
To end in such defeat.

Love's Call

HEN the mantle of peace hovers o'er,
Will you meet me beside love's open door?
When freedom I know from pain's darksome thrall,
Will your heart answer to my love and come when I call?
When soul speaks to soul, after the bitter sweet,
And heart thrills to heart in surrender complete,
Then hasten, Love, not caring for what did befall,
When listens my heart for love's answering call.

Call Me Thine Own

IN the sun's warm beam,
'Neath the moon's cold gleam,
Call me thine own.
When nature but smiles,
And her perfume beguiles,
Call me thine own.

When life's day is bright—and I am glad,
When darksome nights my soul oppress—and I
am sad,
When glad and together, sad and alone,
Sweetheart, I still would have thee
Call me thine own.

My Soul and I

IT matters not to me if it be night or day—
My soul and I go laughing gaily on our way;
Or if life or death we must know,
We will meet it as gaily on we go.
Oh, laughter is for my soul and me!
And oft we bid a laggard heart to cease its cry
Of vain resistance, and join our joyous song.

The Cup of Life

E drank from out the chalice cup
Beneath a cloudless sky,
When life was young and life was good,
Together, you and I.
Life was a broad and level plain,
And flowers grew all along its way.
"Ah, love!" you said, "we shall not walk in vain,
For starry are the nights, and sunlit are the days."

When strange lights beckoned from the heights,
I left you on the level sands,
I took the cup and climbed—
The flowers dropped from out your hands.
At last I stood upon the height,
Where my star of fame had shone,
And with straining eyes looked back through a starless night,
As I drained the dregs alone.

Love's Return

ITH all problems of life I now can cope,
My love returns to-day!
When all seemed lost, aye faith and hope,
December gray is gladsome May,
For my love returns to-day.

Oh perfect day, oh joyous day,
Oh hopeful day,—alas, not known to some!
I lost hope and faith to find my love,
And learn that faith and hope and love are one.

A Hope

IN the magic whirl of golden hours,
When soft balmy breezes beguile,
A lesson to learn from summer flowers,
And rudderless drift down life's stream, the while.

For a hope was born in the promise of spring,
That sweetest fulfilment the summer would bring:
In autumn's wayward heart it lay,
All undreaming and unsought by pain.

And suddenly came warning of a winter day,
A heart left bare to a hope so vain,
Chilled in its icy embrace and untold,
Forever a heart's secret anguish to hold.

A Gift

I PRAYED God his richest gift on me bestow,
He sent your love, dear heart;
And when you came in summer's glow,
I knew we met to part.

Since then, dear love, I 've cherished thee
Through all my doubts and fears,
With aching heart and eyes so full
Of bitter, unshed tears.

Though now I know thy love is mine,
It will not always be;
I go from out thy life all thine,
In life and death still loving thee.

My Peak

TRONG, purposeful, o'ertopping all
it stands,
Ever reaching upward, e'en to
eternity, for 't is not built by
earthly hands,
With foundation built of faith, its tower of hope,
The builder, Love, supplies all earthly needs:
And still it towers above, beyond all earthly hopes
and creeds,
Sustaining, guiding me ever on my rugged way,
Until once more I stand beside my night of hope,
That reaches on to perfect day.

Futile Hopes

LONG the crimson trail of the
setting sun,
I saw the sad ravages of a day;
Strong men laid low and women
frail,
That for a day's hope still kneel and pray.

And when at last the night closed in,
To hide the luridness of that bloody trail,
And proudly reigned the queen of night,
A voice as from out the holy grail
Said, " Cease for futile hopes to pray."
Then looking toward the east I heard,
" Watch for the dawn of a brighter day."

Thy Voice Outside

I CLOSED my heart against Thy word,
But still I heard Thy voice outside
Calling my soul to thee,—and clamoring to be heard,—
Then oblivion came, and I slept:
I dreamed by the waters of Babylon I wept:
I asked not now to be freed from strife,
But, "Give me more abundantly of life;"
Expand, exalt, enlarge my soul, then let me see
Unending peace, and fulness of life in Thee.

The October Maid

N dry-eyed silence like a pale aster she came,
The crown of love she wore so short a time,
And never more to her was life the same.
In the moaning of the wind, the cry of a lost bird,
As lonely to-night I wandered, a note akin to it I heard.
Oh, vague-eyed October maid! you came,
You went like a sigh, a dream,
And life will nevermore be dear to me, or quite the same will seem.

Fulfilment

ITH awakening soul in unspeakable
awe,
I watched the coming of spring
in winter's thaw.
A hoary head laid low—unher-
alded, spring did appear,
With promises of summer, and fulfilled hopes
most dear.

Duty

MPLACABLE, immeasurable heights
of duty,
I scan their vast array,
As heedlessly on pleasure bent I
follow its sunlit way.
Duty? Oh well, I may sometimes feel your
sway,
But of you reckoning I 'll stop and consider some
future day:
Heights to be climbed? For them I never cared,
On broad open plains I have walked, and seemingly
better fared.

Because Love Was Not

EART-SORE and soul-sore, I wandered forth into the night,
With battle-worn spirit I searched for dreams that knew but day's light.
Entangled in an underbrush of fear my soul did long for rest,
And inner sense of peace, a feeling that all is and has been for the best.

I found a dim cool, shadowy nook, and alone in this secreted spot,
I found it another place for my dreams filled with unrest because love was not;
I lingered on, not knowing that near an eternal peace I had strayed,
And lost my old self, as for a futile hope I blindly prayed.

Enchantment

FT I steal away from worldly din—
alone to be,
To my enchanted isle beside
the sea;
Where music, sweet spirit from
above
Speaks to my listening ears
Its message echoing from out each glen and cove,
As eyes gaze forth on sights they hold most dear.

"Oh vanished dream!" you come to me beside
the sea:
I take Enchantment's hand and walk with love
and thee;

Here joyous days on wings of morn awake,
And watch the sunrise as rosy hues doth break—
The herald of a newer better day to be.
Like unto moons that mirror the splendor of the sea,
Enfolded in thy dear embrace, out of some unfathomed space,
All fearless through the boundless blue,
My smiling soul sails on with you.

The Unbidden Guest

ROM out a long and nameless quest
Love came to me,—an unbidden guest;
It came so calm, so silently
And as it came, it went from me.
Life seemed not the same, as before
Love entered through the wonder door;
The very heavens looked down from above,
To ask how I had lived without my love.

Love became an altar fire,
On which to lay many a fond desire,
But somehow this wonder love I could not know,
And as silently it came, I saw it go.
And now that love has flown from me,
Claiming as it went naught but its own,
I cry unto the heavens above,
"I had not lived until I knew my love!"

Hope's Call

HOPE called one day upon my heart,
With other hopes I let her play.
Then came a day when Hope expressed
A wish from me to depart,
And I alas! of me it was so great a part.
Hope said Good-bye and left my heart:
I longed for her return:
In anguish then I cried aloud—but Hope had gone.
She heard me call, she turned, but did not heed—
Prostrate in grief I fell,
Ah me! my heart doth bleed.

Striving

AMONG the struggling fragments of the divine
I search for something to claim as mine.
And so deceptive the illusions in which we live,
'T is hard to find the first sweet promise it will give:
We vainly follow the phantoms of night
To find them lost in the illusion of light—
For light after darkness is all in vain
If it prove too dazzling and back we flee
Into the curtain of darkness, again.

The Music of the Lyre

O the music of a lyre all sweetly tuned and strung,
In olden times mystical and musical themes were sung:
When from the music smoothly flowing, abruptly there came
A discordant tuneless note, where harmony had been.

Told in that note is a memory of departed days, when I loved to hear played
Those musical mystical themes by a gentle sweet maid,
But her life's music soon became broken, the themes incomplete,
And the poor gentle creature seeking oblivion found dark defeat.

Aftermath

UT of the æons of a dread past I
came to thee,
My feet were weary and my
hands besmirched;
And of unclean heart was I.
On litanies my soul alone came through that vale
of tears,
And it alone knew what I sought in thee,
And thy sustaining hand of strength then led me
on.
Then, as that past grew more and more remote,
I scarce believed it e'er had been;
And when unwearied were my feet,
Again I placed my hands in thine,
And walked in pleasant, peaceful paths,
In worthiness I now knew to be mine.

Wisdom

T is not found in books;
It is not caged by thought,
Nor seer, nor prophet can it to
thee impart—
By the heart's blood it is bought.

Immortal Things

HE immortal things of life have grown to be
The little blessings that I find oft come to me,
In smile or touch, or the caress that greets
Us through life's busy stress—or perchance the tear that dims
The eye of a friend in sympathy,
E'en though he hurries by.

Pure loving thoughts that all is good,
A firm faith that all time has withstood,
Are eternal things I know—a truth I still hold dear,
That the immortal things of life
Are now and here.

Recompense

IF through thy sorrow cometh some soul's gain,
If through thy clouds the sun on some faint heart doth shine,
Then never could that suffering be in vain:
And recompense in God's own way and time
Shall come to thee and thine.
Into no life is sorrow sent,
That earnestly to be free from sin has striven,
No heart is e'er left so desolate,
But unto the soul full recompense is given.

Unspoken

Y love is like a poem tome,
And yet I fail to find the words
to tell
One half the charm and magic of
the spell
That holds enthralled my soul in sweetest ecstasy,
And yet eludes my efforts to fathom its mystery.

I only know it holds a hidden charm
That all my doubts and fears disarm,
So all unspoken will be my love, by me,
But ah! the sweet content to thus abide in thee:
So from thy store of magic still cast the spell,
That holds my heart secure and forbids the lips
to tell.

Life's Night and Dawn

IFE'S night was here, vain hopes were dead,
On Love's last bier they gazed, then frightened fled,
And o'er my soul the lamp of faith burned dim and low,
While powerless I stood and waited for the blow.

It fell; though crushed I did arise again;
Blindly groping, I searched for love that once had been,—
I searched all day, at night I found its grave,
And o'er it a loving spirit
One lone last vigil kept
My sorrowing soul to save.

Celestial sounds now fell on my listening ear,
That so short time before,
Seemed deafened by hopeless fear,
While in my soul, responsive chords
Resounded, and woke my heart to joy supreme—
That through the earth abounded.

The Gladsome Day

EARY am I of the night, the wind
with its mournful sighing,
For gladsome day with its sunlit
ways, my heart is crying.
I am so tired of dreams, and their
phantom life,
I long for reality, a victory to win, through battle
and strife.

Not of my choosing are these narrow paths,
For they are only byways,
But give me the broad open road instead
And the gladsome day with its flowers.

Retrospection

INCE thou art gone, my truest friend,
I find that as I view life's trend,
That strangely darkened are its ways,
And slowly, wearily, drag the days.
And I would fain bridge the chasm which yawns
Between the parting and the meeting.

My impatient heart leaps forth in greeting,
And until then my heart will yearn
For the day or night of your return,
And brightest days will brighter beam,
And heaven to earth will nearer seem,
Yea, strangely bright be all life's ways
And swiftly, joyously speed the days
When my good friend returns.

Reveries of a Day

PENED are the secret chambers of
my heart,
And lingering there is some
hidden touch
Of a vanished happiness that to
me doth impart
Reassurance that pleaseth me much.

OW very still the shadows seem to-
day!
And flickering beams of light
among them play:
Like the eddying of a peaceful
flowing river they rise and fall,
Nor pause to linger near the deeper shadows
now at all,
But hurrying on and on to billowy break ahead,
To become one of the many struggling turbu-
lences instead.

CROSS the keyboards some hand
swept idly, but now,
Faint snatches of a long unsung
melody I heard;
And listening, something within
my soul was stirred,
And became atune with the street's restless,
surging, eager throng,
In the great pulsing, throbbing, universal song.

Sacrifice

GO forth with me into the night,
And with the warrior make the fight—
All you with cheeks so pale, so wet,—
And let sorrow teach you forgiveness, and to forget;
Else useless, vain are all your tears,
And empty, fruitless are your fears.
Leaves of promise spring oft from a cankered root,
While barren boughs proclaim the ripened fruit.

Possessed

N expectant triumph I arise to-day,
All gloom and doubt have passed away;
Now in my soul God holds full sway,
And henceforth in His loving care
I 'll walk the perfect way.

Oh Light Divine! shed from above,
Through Thee I know a full and perfect love,
For in my heart, through long-shut door,
Triumph has entered complete
As ne'er before.

Guide thou my footsteps, O Lord! until the end,
Through all the changeful earth—oh, make me wholly thine!
And o'er my soul thy loving vigil keep,
Till my eyes in death are closed, and I awake
From that short restful sleep.

Remembrance

HY can I not forget thee
Among the city throng?
Along the busy mart
I hurried on,
But ever there before me,
Did'st dart a haunting memory,
That did infest my heart
With lingering thoughts and deep unrest
That fain would not depart.

And even now when far from thee,
I sit beside a restless sea,
It speaks in tones of mystery
Too deep for me—too deep for me!
And I cannot forget thee.

Then in the forest depths
I wandered all alone;
I thought—and then
Across my path there shone
A vision come to share with me my solitude.
The vision was of thee—it was of thee.

I stooped to lift the flowering dogwood at my feet,
My heart leaped forth to hear the message sweet—
Of sighing pines as they whispered this to me:
"'T was here he gathered blossoms
All for thee—all for thee."

I listened in strange awe and fear,
While the forest foliage turned dead and sere.
Where 'er I go on land or sea,
The memory I would forget still lingereth with me.
That memory of thee fetters e'en my soul
In striving to gain a once seen but vanished goal.
My soul seems straining ever freedom to meet,
And when I fain would grasp it—Lo!
I still cherish the bitter sweet.

The Poet

HEREFORE this minor note for song is thine?
Shaded by birch, beech, and odorous pine,
In heavy perfumed air of midsummer blooms
He wanders oft amid the forest's verdurous glooms;
His harmonies by some great anguish seem wrung,
As heavy incense upon the expectant air is flung,
Filled with a haunting sense of restless sadness,
That harketh not to the lark's song of gladness.

Yet an eager longing in his heart it leaves
As higher and higher its flight bereaves
The listening ear, that fain would know
From whence such mystic cadences doth flow.
And yet, and yet, he stands immune to-day
E'en of the lark's glad song trilling from out the
heart.

He sees the white oak all dishevelled and drear,
In the ring-dove's call to mate a longing he hears:
In the dry rustle of withered oak leaves
He hears the echo of the sobbing seas.

Sing not to me of laurel-crowns to-day—O trees!
My heart, would dwell alone, away from these:
I fain would press, as here I stand apart,
One sweet spray of rosemary close to my heart.

He knows not to-day how the brook finds
  Where the softly flowing river winds.
To the music of the winds among the swaying
    pines,
How the lark to their melody, its listening ear
    inclines.

Ah! poet, with thy muse, free as the bees among
the clover
Thou wander'st the wide world over,
With power to rise above earth's woe and blight
And sing in heaven's divinely radiant light.

What matter if the minor tones sing loud to-day?
To-morrow as thy heart doth press
One fond memory of a last caress
Thy sadness and thy sorrow will swiftly pass
away.

Foresight

ROM foreseen grief I struggled to
be free,
Yet knew by intuition,
That when this blow did fall on
me,
It was my retribution.

Our Need

H merciful God! who in omnipotence
doth reign,
Unto the fearful souls draw
nigh,
And from Thy living stream of
life
Let the waters of mercy flow.

To all who come to Thee in faith
To those who need Thee, and knoweth not
The need of Thy redeeming light
In their life's sad lot,—

When the hour of darkness comes,
O Father! let them see,
And teach them, Heavenly Father, too,
Their fullest need of Thee.
And from Thy unbounded store above,
Shed on these fearful souls
Thy fullest beam of light and love.

Impatience

MPATIENT to begin life's work,
All days seem now as one,
To me who long for change, yet would not shirk
The opportunity of present work well done.

One of many, and yet alone—
A battle to fight, a victory to be won;
Secure upon the rock of faith to stand till done—
This life-work that as yet is scarce begun.

Awake! Rejoice!

ND I lay in the deep throbbing dark,
With a heart grown numb with fear,
While all about seemed to list and hark
Unto a soul with intent pressed to hear
From out the silence, a reassuring voice,
Bidding a fainting, fearing heart—
Awake! Rejoice!

Easter Praise

O-DAY we rejoice for the glad
Easter time,
The bells with new and deeper
meaning chime,
And with new reverence we kneel
to pray—
With thankful hearts rejoice for this our perfect
day.
Those days of suffering and anguish are done,
And from the tomb of sorrow our Christ has come,
While from a thrall which long our spirits bound,
Has freedom come, and a haven of rest is found.
Now high our banner of faith and love will rise,
For born anew to-day is hope that never dies.
As at the empty tomb we leave our sorrow,
Across the clearing horizon gleams a brighter
morrow;
And as we bow our heads our hearts still sing,
"Look up! Rejoice! All hail, our risen King!"

Eternity and Thee

DO not ask that life's burdens lighter grow:
I do not ask in brighter paths to be:
I only ask that as I journey on, to know
That at the end I 'll find eternity and Thee.

"Thy will be done!" be it crown or cross,
Eternity beckons and counts not earthly gain or loss,
And though the way be dark, I still would only see,
That at the end I have eternity and Thee.

Calm

LONGED for midnight's hour of
calm,
For then I could be free
To throw aside the smiling mask,
That hid my woe and misery.

But now that I am all alone,
No tears are here to flow,
My eyes are dry, my lips are mute,
My heart alone gives up its moan.

And here we sit, my heart and I,
Filled with mad longing for thee, love;
The soul answereth not the heart's wild cry,
But looking upward, sees the light
That cometh from above.

Predestination

O right have I to deem myself
The better of any man,—
For now I view life's troubled span
Far different: and the fact is
borne to me—

It is because it had to be:
I am because I am:
No man can ever live my life:
No one remove the knife
Of retribution from my heart,
Or staunch the wound that gapes apart.
I have but played the part I had to play.

Vision of Easter

HESE that come in robes so white,
Through darkness and tribulation
Have reached the light:
And step by step to find in God
Their shield of strength and peace
secure.

They are ever before Him in His temple of light;
And their robes shed a radiance
Divine and bright;
He suffered and died to show us the way,
And the triumph of this our perfect day
That defies the power of death
And time to come.

Abiding

N the shadow of Thy wings
I will abide:
Close, close to Thy great
Love heart side.

And with consciousness pressed intent
To hear Thy call,
When on my listening ear it
Doth gently fall.

As the stranded seaweed looks
For the coming sea,
So has my eager soul long
Sought for Thee.

This hunger of my soul unsatisfied
By alien law and creed,
Has found in Thee its peace,—
Its larger need.

A Prayer

INSPIRE me with the breath of Omnipotence:
Purify my temple with the white-light of Thy presence.
Through my failures, errors, let me be shown
That I cannot find the way alone.

Let Thy hand beckon me on, toward the goal
Where I shall find peace and satisfaction to my soul.
Fill me with the breath of eternal life
That strengthens, sustains, for all mortal strife.

Within

FOR just a little while—each day—
If we could be
From earthly cares untrammelled
and free,
And voices could speak—from
The inner shrine—
To tell thee of the peace—already thine.

Lay aside vain longing—list
To the voice within
That waits for a signal to tell thee,
" 'T is here thou must begin: "
Here in the inner shrine
Where dwells your own spark of the Divine.

Lift up your eyes above—to the radiant heavens—
And see
Where shines undimmed for all
A beam of light and love.
And hear
The message sweet and low:

"Be still, O heart! Listen and know."
A voice then spake—
It seemed to come from within;
Then strangely I knew a warfare
Was to begin
Between my true self, and what I deemed was I.

But I was strong in purpose,—
This new self to deny,—
Until the battle was over,
Which came when striving ceased.
And filled is my heart
With both old and new peace.

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Victory

BITTER fight was waged;
And as the battle raged
I, with helmet, sword, and shield
Stood dauntless upon
The battle-field.

But the enemy was wary and wise;
And I saw through dimming eyes
That defeat had marked me for his own.
But ever afar
Still victory shone.

And though the enemy
To down me did try,
His cunning and powers
I still can defy—
For victory is my own.

Lest I Be Called Too Soon

WOULD walk carefully along life's
ways,
Guarding and cherishing these
mortal days,
Lest I be called too soon:
Lest I be summoned ere my task be through,
That I in pleasant ways have sought to do.
I now would cherish those days of grief,
Lest my allotted time prove all too brief—
And I be called too soon.

Once in pleasure's elusive paths I did walk,
Loitering to listen to the idle talk;
But the finger of time now points past life's noon,
And I with hurrying feet would hasten on,
Lest I be called too soon.

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